OUR NATIONAL PULPIT

THE CHURCH'S OPPORTUNITY

Within five months 85,000 people used the observatory on Mount Joy, Valley Forge, according to the report of the Commission. In sight of these people was the incomplete Washington Memorial Chapel—memorial of Washington the churchman. While individuals and societies, many of whom are not church people, have pledged about $10,000 for the enrichment of this chapel. Will our church people give $15,000 to complete the nave? Can we expect others to continue their benefactions if those of our own faith do little or nothing?

WHAT OTHERS THINK.

The Massachusetts Society, Sons of the American Revolution, which is raising money for the Massachusetts Bay, in its appeal to its members, said:

"The most common objection to the work (the building of the Massachussetts Bay) that has come to our attention is that it is to be incorporated in a group of buildings, a prominent feature of which is an Episcopal Church. To our minds this should not be regarded as an objection, but rather as an argument in its favor. Nowhere during the struggle which ended in our independence was the hand of Providence more signally displayed than at Valley Forge during the dark Winter of 1777-78.

"It was there that Washington is known to have appealed again and again to heaven for that divine aid which he and our fathers believed must be vouchsafed, if they were to be successful in their desperate effort to achieve independence, and it was there that needed help came in the person of Baron Steuben, through whose efforts the undisciplined soldiery were made fit to meet the disciplined forces of Great Britain and overcome them. What spot, then, in the whole United States is so suitable as Valley Forge for the erection of a memorial church, that shall testify to the faith of our fathers in an overruling Providence, and what branch of the Christian church has a better claim to erect a memorial church of its own order than the one of which Washington was a devout member?

RIGHTEOUSNESS EXALTETH A NATION.

The Washington Memorial Chapel does not stand for ecclesiatical aggrandizement, but for the truth that in the Church many of the best Americans have been reared, and that religion is the strength of the Nation. Henry Clay is said to have considered "the Episcopal Church" and "the Supreme Court" to be the two great bulwarks of American liberty. If that be true, then the people of the country should have the opportunity of knowing what the former has done for them, and can do.

Every American knows of Washington's prayer at Valley Forge, and patriots of every religious belief believe in the power of prayer, and will be glad for the opportunity and place for the offering of their prayers for the Nation of to day where Washington prayed in '77. Bishop Van Buren has happily termed Valley Forge "the Nation's Holy of Holies." The Chapel is the House of Prayer for all the people of the land, for whom its doors are daily open. It is designed and built to encourage prayer for the Nation, and as an incitement to this, there has been painted in the porch windows Washington's valedictory prayer: "I commend the interests of our dearest country to the protection of Almighty God, and those who have the superintendence of them to His holy keeping."

SOME HISTORY.

Feb. 22, 1903. The erection of the Washington Memorial Chapel was suggested.

June 19, 1903. The 125th anniversary of the Evacuation of Valley Forge, the deed for the ground was presented by Mr. I. Heston Todd and the corner-stone was laid.

June 19, 1904. President Roosevelt made an address in the temporary Chapel.

June 19, 1905. The New Jersey Bay in the "Cloister of the Colonies," given by Miss Sarah R. Chew, was dedicated.

1905. The Sunday Schools of Pennsylvania gave their Advent offerings to place the stone lining in the Chapel.

Feb. 22, 1906. The first service was held in the Chapel by the Bishop of Virginia. (The walls were only one-third their height, as they are now.)

June 19, 1906. The Pennsylvania Bay, given by Mr. T. Broom Belfield, was dedicated.

June 19, 1907. The Virginia Bay. given by Mr. George C. Thomas, was dedicated.

June 19, 1908. The Maryland Bay, given by Mr. James E. Mitchell, was dedicated.

TWO COMMENDATIONS.

THE PRESIDENT.

"It is a great pleasure to come here this afternoon and say a word in behalf of the project to erect a memorial Chapel on this great historic site. . . .

"I congratulate you that it is your good fortune to be encouraged in erecting a memorial to the great man who was equal to the great deeds that he was called upon to perform, to the man and the men who showed by their lives that they were indeed doers of the word, and not hearers only."

THE PRESIDING BISHOP.

"My Dear Mr. Burk:

"I am sure that any effort to consecrate such a historic place as Valley Forge is most commendable. It was markedly a witness of Christian faith and enduring patriotism in the past. Let the Church be built to continue for all future the witness of the same faith and patriotism. I am in hearty sympathy and accord with your excellent plan. Faithfully yours,

"DANIEL S. TUTTLE."

A PRACTICAL ENDORSEMENT.

The Convocation of Norristown considers this such an important mission field that it provides a part of the salary of a missionary in it. The Rev. Francis T. H. Finn is at work under the Rev. W. Herbert Burk, and ministers to five villages and to a people scattered over fifteen square miles of farmland. Fifteen were confirmed in 1907; twenty-two in 1908.

Recently the Historical Society of Gloucester County, N. J., the children of the public schools of Reading and Pottstown, Pa., and the Alumni Associations of the Girls' High and Normal Associations of Philadelphia, numbering in all over 500, visited the Chapel and listened to addresses on the religious life of Washington and the faith of the founders of the nation.